



Jeff Wright  
Mayor

# TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET  
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

### MINUTES

#### NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

March 22, 2010

**Audio verbatim transcript of meeting available in Town Clerk's Office**

Mayor Wright called the Special Meeting of the Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Helen Nelson Room, Town Hall.

I PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II ROLL CALL

Councilors Present

Councilor Banach  
Councilor Casasanta  
Councilor Cohen  
Councilor Klett  
Councilor McBride  
Councilor Lenares  
Councilor Nasinnyk  
Mayor Wright

Councilors Absent

Councilor Nagel

Staff Present

John Salomone, Town Manager  
Jaime Trevethan, Executive Assistant  
Ann Harter, Director of Finance  
Lisa Rydecki, Deputy Finance Director  
Paul Boutot, IT Director  
Bob Korpak, Facilities Director

III PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – ON AGENDA (none)

IV CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

- A. General Government (Town Council, Town Manager, Finance, Courts, Elections, Town Attorney, Personnel, Town Clerk, General Services, Facilities Management, Information Technology)

### Town Council

Town Manager Salomone indicated that the increase in dues and subscriptions is to include Town Council memberships in the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) and the Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST). He indicated that the COST membership fees used to be funded by the contingency fund, and noted that Councilor Klett had requested the addition of the CCM funding. The Council discussed the two organizations and their benefits to the Council and the Town. Deputy Mayor Lenares inquired whether the Town had previously utilized CCM. Town Manager Salomone stated that the Town was a member until about five years ago. He spoke favorably of the CCM and its benefits to the Town.

### Town Manager's Office

Town Manager Salomone stated that the major change in the Town Manager's Office budget is a decrease in full-time salaries as a result of a new staff member replacing a retiring staff member.

### Probate Court – no change

### Elections

Town Manager Salomone indicated that the increase in this budget has been included in anticipation of opening the polls for both Democratic and Republican primaries in 2010.

### Finance/Assessor/Revenue Collector

Town Manager Salomone noted that the slight budget increase in Finance Accounting and Administration is due to a step increase for a full-time employee. He noted that the costs associated with the upcoming revaluation process will be included in the capital budget rather than the general budget.

Town Manager Salomone noted a slight decrease in seasonal hours in the Revenue Collector's office. He indicated that the decrease in the Local Elderly Tax Release Program is a reduction due to a trend, not due to cuts to the program.

### Town Clerk/Records Administration

Town Manager Salomone stated that the major change in the Town Clerk's budget is a reduction in part-time salary hours.

### Facilities Management

Town Manager Salomone indicated that utilities including heating have been centralized into the Facilities budget, and the costs have trended down due to better usage history analysis. He noted an increase in Contractual Services – Facilities Maintenance, which is due to the proposed change over to contractual cleaning services at the Senior and Disabled Center. The Council discussed concerns over reported problems with contractual cleaning services at the Library. Facilities Director Bob Korpak addressed the Council's concerns and indicated that it is a difficult commodity to purchase due to a high turnover of workers in the industry. He noted that many of the Library's concerns have been addressed and stressed that proper management of the program is key to its success. The Council also discussed how the change

to a contractual cleaning service might impact oversight of evening programs at the Senior Center.

The Council discussed the high cost of heating the Kellogg Eddy House. Town Manager Salomone outlined the caretaker program at that location and noted that the heating costs are high, in part, because it is an old building and not energy-efficient. He noted that there has been discussion about possibly decommissioning the building during the winter months in order to save on energy costs.

### Central Services

Town Manager Salomone indicated that the \$50,000 reduction in Other Contractual Services is due to two studies that were not completed, and therefore removed from the budget. Mayor Wright elaborated that the studies were to locate Town/Board of Education efficiencies and he requested that the funds be allocated for studies regarding regionalization.

### Information Technology

Information Technology Director Paul Boutot addressed the Council regarding the IT budget. He indicated that a review of the Town's telephone system found several lines that were no longer used and therefore not needed, which has resulted in an approximately \$17,000 savings to the Town.

Town Manager Salomone stated that the increase in part-time salaries reflects a full year of the part-time Computer/Application Specialist position, which was filled in September 2009.

### B. Insurance/Misc

Municipal Insurance – no change from last year

Greater Hartford Transit District – no change from last year

### Employee Benefits

Town Manager Salomone explained that the increase in this fund is the result of a lack of interest income to the pension accounts. He explained that pensions are funded from three sources: the employee, the Town and interest income, and noted that when interest income is down, the Town must make up the difference.

Donations and Contributions – no change from last year

### Contingency/Manager's Contingency/Special Contingency

Town Manager Salomone explained that these are the Town's reserve funds and noted that they were not utilized last year and will remain unchanged for the upcoming year.

### C. Employee Leave Liability

Town Manager Salomone stated that this account covers the Town's liability for accrued sick time to be paid out to an employee upon termination of employment. He noted that this budget will remain flat to last year.

#### D. Special Reserve Funds/Other Funds

Town Manager Salomone reviewed the various accounts in the Special Reserve Funds, including Cemetery, Road Aid Maintenance, LOCIP Fund, Recreation Program, Human Services – Needs and Donations, and Senior and Disable Center Donations. He noted that this is separate from the general fund and this item does not affect the mill rate, as this fund is used to account for proceeds of specific revenue sources.

#### E. Revenues

Town Manager Salomone noted that while the proposed Town budget calls for an increase of 3.9%, growth of the Grand List will keep the mill rate increase to 3.0%. The Council discussed various revenue sources, including tax collection and State Aid.

The Council also discussed the Town's Fund balance of \$2,000,000. The Council and Finance Director Ann Harter discussed how the fund balance amount impacts the Town's credit rating and they also discussed saving the funds to be used in the event of an emergency versus applying some or all of the balance to the budget to lower taxes.

#### V PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – ON AGENDA (none)

#### VI REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Mayor Wright noted that this is the end of the departmental budget reviews and urged members of the public to attend and participate in Council meetings, and to contact Councilors with any questions or concerns.

#### VII ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn meeting was made at 8:38 p.m. by Councilor Banach, and seconded by Councilor Nasinnyk. Motion passed 8-0 (Councilor Nagel Absent).

Respectfully Submitted

Mrs. Jaime Trevethan  
Executive Assistant to the Town Manager

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